PERCEPTION OF ADULT STUDENTS TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT

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ABSTRACT

The paper investigated the perception and attitude of adult education students of University of Port Harcourt towards the introduction of Entrepreneurship education in the school Curriculum. The design of the study was correlation research design. The instrument for the study was a 10-item questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument had a reliability coefficient of 0.70, obtained using the split-half reliability method. The population of the study comprises of 200-400 level students of the Department of Adult and Non-formal Education of University of Port Harcourt, with enrolment figure of 425. A sample of 200 was drawn from the population through a random sampling technique. Analysis was with weighted mean and percentages. Pearson product moment correlation statistic was used for test of hypothesis. The result showed that the adult student had positive perception and attitude towards the introduction of Entrepreneurship education in University curriculum. The test of relationship between their perception and attitude showed a significant relationship. The paper recommended the introduction of other livelihood skills for adult students of the University.

KEYWORDS: Perception, Adult, Student, Entrepreneur, Education

INTRODUCTION

One basic criticism against liberal education is its failure to prepare its recipient with the requisite skill and knowledge for assured relevance and viability in labour market. According to Tarun (2007), it is regretful that our educational institutions are more concerned with academic preparation that is largely theoretical, thereby regulating the utility aspects of education. This practice has resulted to several unanswered questions which has created numerous problems for products of our tertiary institutions.

This situation may have evoked the directive of the National University Commission (NUC) on the introduction of entrepreneurship education in all Nigerian Universities. Entrepreneurship education is aimed at stimulating entrepreneurship spirit for independent
small business ownership or development of opportunity seeking managers within organizations (Thomas and Barra 1994). The main concern of entrepreneurship education is to develop entrepreneurial skills and attitude and competencies relevance for successful business practices.

Streeter, Jacquette and Hovis (2003) in Obikeze and Ughammadu (2010) described entrepreneurship education as a form of education which help student to learn about starting and running a business or enterprise. It is that aspect of education that provides an individual with the necessary skills, aptitude and knowledge which will enable him become self reliance and sufficient all through life.

According to Drucker, entrepreneurship is a process of creating or seizing an opportunity and pursuing it regardless of the resources currently controlled. In the views of Frank (1990), entrepreneurship is risk taking, aimed at combating poverty, unemployment, etc. Entrepreneurship education aids National development through reduction of poverty rate, and creation of employment, especially for out-of-school youths.

The European Commission (2005:4) in Koko, Ikpesu & Abayi (2009) defined entrepreneurship as an individual’s ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation, risk-taking as well as the ability to plan and manage projects. Supports everyone in day to day life at home and society, employees in being aware of their work, been able to seize opportunities and is a foundation for specific skills and knowledge needed by entrepreneurs establishing social or commercial activities. Before the generalization of entrepreneurship education to all faculties by National University Commission, the course was taught only in management base discipline, thereby depriving the rest of the student this self reliant skills and knowledge. With the introduction of the course across all faculties, the students are now given the opportunity to acquire basic business skills and knowledge which are determinants of successful entrepreneurial practice.

It is worthy to note that, of the millions of Nigerian who nurse the desire to go into business, only few actually begin and less than half of these few succeeds. This could be attributed to the lack of knowledge of entrepreneurial education.

Entrepreneurship education is a carefully planned process that leads to the acquisition of entrepreneurial competence. On the other hand, entrepreneurship education skills refer to having enough ability, experience and knowledge to do something well, whereas education is a set of very valuable skills needed by the entrepreneur to avoid future trials and errors.
Entrepreneurship education has many values to both individuals as well as the nation. This education has the following values according to UNESCO (1997):

a) It helps in the orientation of individuals towards innovation. It also produces individuals who are capable of foreseeing the future needs arising from new ways of thinking;

b) It creates awareness to the fact that the key to development is human resources. It further, emphasizes the need to human abilities, change their values and attitudes in order to accelerate the process of development;

c) It emphasizes entrepreneurship as a significant variable in the development process and points it out as a career option.

d) It instills in the youths a longer need to achieve a larger segment of the population.

Given the demographics of the clients of Adult education in our Universities, the introduction of entrepreneurship education is a welcomed development, as the course will add to the much required functional skills for adult’s adjustment in society. In the light of this, the researcher wants to know if the attitude of the adult students, will match their perceived enthusiasm for the course.

The following research questions were used guide the study?

- What is the perception of Adult education students of University of Port Harcourt in the introduction of entrepreneurship education?
- What is the attitude of Adult education student toward the introduction entrepreneurship of education in University of Port Harcourt?

One hypothesis was formulated to guide the decisions for the study.

- **Ho:** There is no significant relationship between the perceived enthusiasm of Adult education students of and their attitude towards the introduction of entrepreneurship education in University of Port Harcourt.

The design of the study is co relational, as it is built to establish relationship between the perception and attitude of Adult students towards the subject matter. The population of the study is made up of all 200 to 400 level students of the Department of Adult and Non-Formal Education of University of Port Harcourt, with enrolment figure of 425. The sample size of the study was 200, which was randomly selected from the population. The instrument used for the study was a 10-item questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument’s face and content validity was certified by two expert in measurement and evaluation, while the reliability of the instrument was established through a split half reliability method.
reliability co-efficient of 0.70 was obtained, which confirms the instrument is reliable. The instrument has four point likert scale with criterion mean of 2.5. Data analysis was through mean and percentage. The hypothesis was tested with the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics.

**Results:**

Responses to the items, research question and hypothesis are presented in tables.

**Research question one**

What is the perception of adult education students of University of Port Harcourt in the introduction of entrepreneurship education?

**Table 1. Mean and percentage response of Adult students Perception of Entrepreneurship Education.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>How do you see the introduction of entrepreneurship education in the dept. The introduction of entrepreneurship education is increased work load to students.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship course will equip students for business opportunities even while in school.</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>375%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship education will reduce dependence on white cola job by graduates.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The course will make students to be creative in business.</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>375%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>68</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship education should be studied at all levels, not only once in the whole of the programme</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 show that the adult students have positive perception towards the introduction of Entrepreneurship education in University of Port Harcourt. All the five items responded to, were positive with their criterion mean above 2.5 and a grand mean of 3.1. The item on the perception Entrepreneurship education as additional work load ranks highest with a man of 3.5. Closing following this is the item on their perception that the course will offer business opportunities even while in school, with a mean of 3.4. The item on reduction of dependence on white cola job by graduates show a mean of 2.9, the same with the feeling of the students that Entrepreneurship education should be studied not just once, but at every level in the programme. Creativity in business ranked fifth with a mean of 2.6.
Research Question Two

What is the attitude of Adult education students towards the introduction of Entrepreneurship education in University of Port Harcourt?

Table 2: Mean and percentage response of Adult student’s attitude to Entrepreneurship education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SDA</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Student like been early to Entrepreneurship class.</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>200%</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The attendance to Entrepreneurship class use to be more than other classes.</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>200%</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Students participate more in Entrepreneurship class than other classes.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>200%</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Students do not make noise in Entrepreneurship class as they do in other classes.</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>150%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>200%</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Students response to lecturers question indicates that they are interested and are understanding the lecturers.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>145%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>200%</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that, two out of the five items on the table were rejected. This was because their mean response were less than 2.5 criterion mean, while three of the items had their means above 2.5 and were therefore accepted. Item 5, which is on students response to questions, as an indication of understanding ranked 1st, with a mean with a mean of 3.0. This was followed by item 4, class atmosphere with a mean of 2.8 and next was student class participation with a mean of 2.7. However the table shows a grand mean of 2.6 which means that the attitude of the Adult students of University of Port Harcourt towards the introduction of entrepreneurship as a course of study is positive.

Table 3. Test of hypothesis on the relationship between perception and attitude of Adult education students towards Entrepreneurship education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sign. level</th>
<th>r. c</th>
<th>rt</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.8220</td>
<td>0.8054</td>
<td>Reject Null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>652</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At 3 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance r-calculated is 0.8220 and r-table value is 0.8054. Since r-calculated is greater than r-critical value, the null hypothesis; there is no significant relationship between the perception of Adult education students and their attitude towards entrepreneurship educations is therefore rejected. The alternate, there is significant relationship between the perception of adult education student and their attitude toward entrepreneurship education is accepted.
Discussion

The result of the analysis shows that the perception of Adult students towards the introduction of entrepreneurship education in University of Port Harcourt is positive. The Adult students of University of Port Harcourt perceived entrepreneurship education as an added advantage to their livelihood skills and knowledge hence their attitude towards it was positive. They also saw the course as one that gives knowledge and skills for immediate application and utilization. This finding is in consonant with the view of Bariko (1981) in Wordu (2006) that the basic condition for effective learning in Adult education is the awareness of some inadequacies in his functional life, have a clear picture of the behaviour desired and try out alternative with positive support. Hence the declaration, “give me education for today” (education for immediate use/application).

The result of the test of relationship between the Adult students perception and attitude towards Entrepreneurship education showed a significant relationship as shown in table 3. It is worthy to not that entrepreneurial skill is a livelihood skill. The findings of the study lends evidence to the work of John and Ijah (2009) that adult learners are always interested in livelihood skills which enables them have the basic necessities of life, and set them above poverty line.

This finding is also in agreement with Obikeze (2009) that the perception of an individual about a phenomena will in most cases determine his attitude to it. The adult students of University of Port Harcourt have a high perception of the introduction of Entrepreneurship education, hence their positive attitude towards the course.

Conclusion

In Nigeria, graduate unemployment has become more pronounced now than in the past. The state of the economy is not promising any positive change in the near future hence the need for a more functional education. The adult learners are peculiar, as they need only the knowledge and skill that will aid them in their struggle for survival. The introduction of entrepreneurship education is a welcomed development and beyond this, there are still other livelihood skill which will appeal to the adult students as entrepreneurship education. The paper concludes that, given the characteristics of adult students, more livelihood skill should be introduced to reduce over dependence on paid employment.
Recommendations

- There should be Entrepreneurship centre in all Universities to give practical guidance to complement the theory.
- To ensure sustainability, Entrepreneurship education should be made compulsory at all levels of the school system.
- To make the school system more functional, other livelihood skill should be introduced.
- The government should provide soft loan to graduates who may wish to practice the knowledge and skill acquire from the course.
- The University authority should award prizes to the best performing students in the course, to arouse interest.

References